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EASTERN

F.O.

371

1947

PALESTINE

File No. 84

pp. 3391 - 4106

1	2	3	4	5	6

Reference:

FO 371 / 61841

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CLOSED
UNTIL

1978

61841

44

E

E 3391

2

1947

PALESTINE

24 APR

Registry Number

E3391/84/31

FROM

G.O. Crowley

No.

Embassy

Dated

Paris

Received in Registry

72/140/47
16 Apr 1947
24

Illegal Immigrant Ships
Refer 4.0.1.1 533 (E 2789/84/31) re oil
bunker, for Illegal Immigrant Ships, landed
2 men to M. Bouquet re this trip stating
that they wish to comply with HM & Policy
and would be glad if French would send
and accept at same time instruct the Procurement
d'achat de carburant, as per control oil
bunkering in all the ports of France to comply.

Last Paper.

3145

References.

29/4

(Print.)

61841

(How disposed of.)

8, Highlan, P.O.
Wodch.
Lancet } Adolaty
Shera
✓ MIS
May 3
[Signature]

(Action completed)

[Signature]

(Index)

[Signature]

Next Paper.

3426

32003 F.O.P

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Reference:

FO 371 / 61841

COPYRIGHT OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

TOP SECRET

72/140/47.

British Embassy.

Paris.

16th April 1947
E 3391

24 APR

Dear Beith,

2789/84/21

I refer to your telegram No. 553 on the subject of oil bunkers for the vessels engaged in the traffic in illegal immigrants to Palestine and to our subsequent telephone conversation when you informed me that Shell were unable to take a unilateral decision not to provide bunkers on French territory but must consult the Direction des Carburants.

On handing to Monsieur Bousquet of the Quai d'Orsay the two memoranda concerning this traffic of which I am sending you copies under separate cover, Ashley Clarke yesterday raised the subject of the oil bunkers, with particular reference to the President Warfield, which he told Monsieur Bousquet was understood to have arrived in Marseilles that day and to be destined for this traffic.

Ashley Clarke pointed out that Shell wish to comply with our policy and that we should be glad if the French would agree and would at the same time instruct the Groupement d'Achat de Carburants, who control oil bunkering in all the ports of France, to act similarly.

The Quai d'Orsay had already had information on this matter through a communication from the Jupiter Oil Company. Ashley Clarke explained that this was a further method of checking the illegal traffic in which we hoped that the French would agree to co-operate. Monsieur Bousquet took note of the matter and agreed that it was a point which might be further discussed after the Council of Ministers have considered the general principle of helping us over the illegal Jewish traffic.

Yours ever,

G.A. Crossley.

G.A. Crossley.

J.G.S. Beith, Esq.,
Eastern Department,
Foreign Office, S.W.1.

enter 3

Copy to

Adm.

M15.

usual names

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Group *Fo*

Class 371

Piece 61841

Department of origin under Section 3 (4)

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E3426/84/31

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Reference: **FO 371 / 61841**

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E

E 3477

4

PALESTINE

26 Apr.

Registry
Number

TELEGRAM FROM

No.

Dated

Received
in Registry

E 3477/84/31.

Legal Immigrant

W. Fox

2454.

26 Apr 1948

26

Illegal Immigrant Ships.

Refer to (1) 553 & Paris (E 2789/84/31) re oil
for Illegal Immigrant Ships. Major Petroleum
attacks has taken proceedings from which British
sources in close touch with Germany and has
been told that Germany would not deny oil bunkers
to ships other than those having standing contracts
without specific instructions from State Dept.

Last Paper.

3426

References.

(Print.)

(How disposed of.)

4. Telegram. B.O.
Dodd
Lynch } Aclarity
ditchell H.F.P.
Ocker 21.1.5.
Garvey
✓ April 29
P.T.O.

(Action
completed.)

J.E. 21/1

(Index)

4/8/48

Next Paper.

E 3498

(Minutes.)

I submit a draft reply, based
on information from Mr Mitchell
of My. J.F.A.P. He concurs.

J.S. Beint

Apr. 29

NB. Mr Mitchell consulted

Mr Berthoud, who was definitely of
the opinion that Washington were
right in wanting to take this
up with the State Dept. first. I
had suggested that the Embassy might
approach the State Dept. and the
Companies simultaneously. Draft
Amended JB.

I think this action is desirable, though
it is unlikely to be immediately effective, when
however, at the end of the Special Session I

the

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Reference:

FO

371

61841

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(above request)
 the U.N. Assembly the Sec Gen asks
 all States to collaborate in stopping
 illegal immigration we can return to
 the charge.

R. J. Arran
 1/5
 N. American Dipl.
 6/5

It is odd that Calley should
 have done this. 26th Sept. he
 angry if he heard of it.

May 16

MJ
 8/5

The position to date is as follows. In our
 original telegram of 12th April (E 2789) we asked
 Washington, Rome and Paris to approach the
 Italian and French Govts. and (in the case of
 Washington) the Socony Vacuum Oil Company
 in order to deny licenses to illegal immigrant
 ships.

No definitive reply has been received from
 any of them, though the position in Italy
 (please see E 3499) is more hopeful than
 elsewhere. Please see E 3479 for provisional reply
 from Paris (para. 9).

There does not seem to be any action which
 could usefully be taken until further replies
 are received from these 3 ports.

[Signature]
 (S.E. Cable)
 17/5

Now please see E 4390

27/5

5
 Tel. w. Tan

4637

Rtd. Paris 1099
 Rome 172
 Lisbon 31 } Saw

May 9.

8/1. Hepburn, C.O.
 Dadds, Admirty.
 Scherff, R.I.S.
 Mitchell, R.O.F.P.

May 15

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FO 371 / 61841

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Cypher/OTF

DEPARTMENTAL NO. 2

FROM WASHINGTON TO FOREIGN OFFICE

Lord Inverchapel
No. 2454

D. 10.28 p.m. 24th April, 1947.

24th April, 1947.

R. 7.00 a.m. 25th April, 1947.

Repeated to : Paris)
Rome) SAVING
Lisbon)

IMPORTANT
TOP SECRET

MMMMMM

E 3477

26 APR

Your telegram No. 553 to Paris: oil for illegal Jewish immigrant ships.

Petroleum Attaché has taken soundings from a reliable British source in close touch with Socony and has been told that Socony would not (repeat not) deny oil bunkers to ships other than those having standing contracts without specific instructions from the State Department. A policy decision of this nature would have to be agreed by the Socony Directors and they would not make a direct agreement with us on a matter affecting United States policy unless they knew that the State Department approved. They would thus go at once to the State Department if we approached them direct.

2. If State Department were to agree, Petroleum Attaché considers that Socony would very probably co-operate fully with us.

3. Since it is evident that the decision will rest with the State Department, I should prefer, if you consider matter should be pursued here, to take it up with them in the first instance, in order to avoid the appearance of going through the back door and the almost certain risk of their learning of our action at second hand through Socony. I should be grateful for your instructions.

4. Please inform Ministry of Fuel and Power.

Foreign Office pass Saving to Paris, Rome and Lisbon
As my telegrams Nos. 100, 59 and 3 respectively.

[Repeated Saving to Paris, Rome and Lisbon.]



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1	2	3	4	5	6

Reference: **FO 371 / 81841**

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Registry
No. E 3477/84/31

OUT FILE

J.B.

Despatched

M.

Draft.

WASHINGTON

SECRET

IMPORTANT

Your telegram No. 2454 [of April 24:

Denial of oil bunkers to illegal Jewish
immigrant ships.]

I agree that you should take the
matter up with the State Department,
requesting that they should approach
Socony and the other companies concerned.

If and when State Dept. agree to issue the

Repeat to:-

PARIS (Saving) 10995/1 Directive required the petroleum attaché
ROME (Saving) 172,564 could pursue the matter with the companies.

LISBON (Saving) 3156/2. I understand that "President Warfield,"

My. F. & P. concur after Anglo Iranian and Shell had refused

Copy to:-

Colonial Office
(Mr. Higham)

Admiralty
(Mr. Dodds)

M.I.5 (Mr. Scherr)

Fuel and Power
(Mr. R.C. Mitchell)

bunkers, was bunkered at Marseilles by
Caltex who, moreover, supplied gas oil
in drums which was presumably for the use
of smaller vessels in the traffic.

3. I therefore suggest that you take
similar action with Caltex.

NOTHING TO BE WRITTEN IN THIS MARGIN.

N. Am. 2/3 JB Apr. 30
2/5
1/5

MB
8/5

1	2	3	4	5	6
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8

Cypher/OTP

DEPARTMENTAL NO. 2

FROM FOREIGN OFFICE TO WASHINGTON

No. 4637

No. 4887
9th May, 1947.

D. 6.20 a.m. 9th May, 1947

Repeated to Paris No. 1099)
Rome No. 172) SAVING
Lisbon No. 31)

0 0 0 0

IMPORTANT
SECRET

Your telegram No. 2454 [of April 24th: Denial of oil bunkers to illegal Jewish immigrant ships].

I agree that you should take the matter up with the State Department, requesting that they should approach Socony and the other companies concerned. If and when State Department agree to issue the directive required the petroleum attaché could pursue the matter with the companies.

2. I understand that "President Warfield", after Anglo Iranian and Shell had refused bunkers, was bunkered at Marseilles by Caltex who, moreover, supplied gas oil in drums which was presumably for the use of smaller vessels in the traffic.

3. I therefore suggest that you take similar action with Caltex.

1 2 3 4 5 6
 1 2
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77

E

E 3498

9

28 APR

PALESTINE

Registry
Number

E3498/84/31

TELEGRAM FROM

No.

M. Jernam,
Stockholm

Dated

330

Received
in Registry

25 April 1947

28

Illegal Immigrant-Ship.

Photo 'SAN BASILIO' is reported and apparently
seaworthy at Gatheburg. He still has
no registration at Lloyd's, unless he gets
nationality. Swedes will not give him clearance.
If he attempt sail without clearance,
Swedes will ask Police to arrest him. No
indications of preparations to sail. Has
not full crew aboard.

Last Paper.

3477

(Minutes.)

Satisfactory

References.

Northen Dept.
✓ gma
7. ✓

13. Apr. 28

(Print.)

(How disposed of.)

8/ digdam. P.O.
Dodd
Sunder
Adams
Jensen
Garvey
May.
April

(Action
completed.)

JEM/r

(Index.)

4/8/47

Next Paper.

3499

32003 F.O.P.

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Reference:

FO 371 / 61841

Cypher/OTP

E 3498

28 APR

ADMIRALTY DISTRIBUTION.

FROM STOCKHOLM TO FOREIGN OFFICE.

Mr. Jerram
No. 330

25th April, 1947

D: 3.30 p.m. 25th April, 1947

R: 9.00 p.m. 25th April, 1947

~~~~~

Subject: Jewish illegal immigration ships.

Reference my 241134/February.

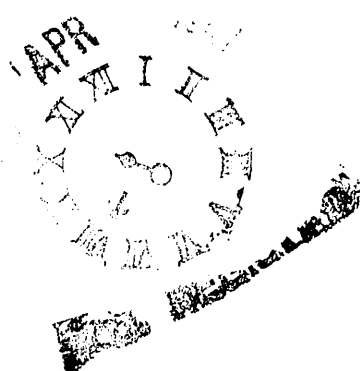
"San Basilio" is refitted and apparently seaworthy at Gothenburg. She still has no registration Lloyds, [grp. undec. ? unless] she can get some nationality the Swedes will not give her clearance.

3. [sic]. If she attempts to sail without clearance the Swedish customs authorities state they will ask the police to arrest her.

4. No indication that she is preparing to leave. She has not got a complete crew on board.

The above is for Admiralty from the Naval Attaché Stockholm.

Time of origin 251410.)



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E

E 3499

11

PALESTINE

28 APR

Registry Number } E3499/84/31

TELEGRAM FROM

No.

Dated

Received in Registry

Sir A. Exley

Rome

946

24 Apr 1947

28

Illegal Immigrant Ships  
 Refers to L. 151 784 (E 2789/84/31) plus  
 address letter to Mr. J. Foreign Affairs  
 in house of rep. regarding Italian Coast  
 to regenerate a drifting oil tanker &  
 ship engaged in illegal Jewish traffic.

Last Paper.

3498

References.

(Print.)

(How disposed of.)

8/ Higham B.O.

Dodd

Smith 3 Colony

Sheriff M.I.S.

Garvey

Mitchell M.I.S.

29 April

(Minutes.)

This is satisfactory. I have  
 drawn Mr Mitchell's attention to  
 the point in para. 2, on which  
 he is acting

W. S. Beins  
 Apr. 24

R. S.  
 5/5

(Action completed.)

6/10/5

(Index)

4/9/5

Next Paper.

E 3792

32003 F.O.P.

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E 3499  
28 APR

## Cypher/OTP

DEPARTMENTAL No.2.

FROM ROME TO FOREIGN OFFICE.

Sir N. Charles  
No. 946

D: 6.45 p.m. 24th April, 1947

24th April, 1947

R: 12.15 a.m. 25th April, 1947

Repeated to Washington.

၆၆၆၆၆၆၆၆

**TOP SECRET.**

Your telegram No. 784. L

I have addressed a letter to the Minister for Foreign Affairs in the sense of your telegram under reference requesting the Italian Government to co-operate in denying oil bunkers to ships engaged in illegal Jewish immigration.

2. Meanwhile members of my staff have had a useful private discussion on this subject with De Graan head of the Comitato Italiano Petroli who is also the representative in Italy of Shell. De Graan though Dutch is decidedly in the British camp and is willing to co-operate in every way possible. The branch of Shell in Italy had not yet been asked to issue instructions referred to in paragraph 2 of your telegram under reference.

3. It appears that C.I.P. which is a governmental agency do have a monopoly of distribution and issue of all bunker oil in Italy. (I would observe, however, that part of this oil is supplied by the Standard Oil Company of America which like other foreign companies make contracts with Shipping companies direct). De Graan thought that with the co-operation of the Italian authorities who have to license individual issues, an effective check might be put on supply of oil to suspected vessels in the larger harbours. He pointed out however that there were numerous smaller ports where oil might be obtained from unofficial or black market sources without the knowledge of C.I.P. or Italian authorities. Effective action by Italian Government in other fields will force suspected purchasers into this market and my specialist advisers will now try and devise means of thwarting them.

Please repeat to Washington as my telegram No. 175.

[Repeated to Washington.]

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79.

E

E 3792

13

1947

PALESTINE

8 MAY

Registry  
Number

TELEGRAM FROM

No.

Dated

Received  
in Registry

E3792/84/31

Dir. A. B. L. L. L.

Rome.

1037.

6 May 1947

8

Illegal Immigrant Ship.  
 Ref. F.O. 11 945 (E 3007/84/31). Has  
 communicated message to Count Sporga  
 and asked him, if could convey to Jof?  
 his personal assurance that he would help  
 in repeating ship having Italian port and  
 in other ways of staying. Illegal circulation  
 of Jews. Count Sporga said, he could.

Last Paper.

3499

References.

(Print.)

(How disposed of.)

I. I. Dist.

May 12

(Action  
completed.)

(Index.)

J. I. Dist.

J. I. Dist.

Next Paper.

3807

(Minutes.)

The final assurance is  
 satisfactory. See also the  
 detailed reports from Rome  
 in E 3829 & E 3830

H. J. B. 371  
 May 10

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14  
[This telegram is of particular secrecy and should be retained by the authorised recipient and not passed on].

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FROM ROME TO FOREIGN OFFICE.

E 3702

Sir N. Charles.  
No. 1037.

D. Untimed. 8 MAY 7th May 1947.

6th May 1947.

R. 1.50 p.m. 7th May 1947.

W:W:W:W

IMPORTANT.

Your telegram No.945: Jewish illegal immigration.

I communicated your personal message to Count Sforza on May 3rd and saw him personally last evening when I told him it was of the utmost importance that the Italian authorities should prevent these illegal immigrants to Palestine continuing their journey from Italian ports. I said that the Italian authorities had shown appreciation of our point of view to a certain extent and that His Majesty's Government understood why Italy should not wish to harbour any more persons than she could feed in these troublous times. You however relied on his support during this difficult period. He would understand they could not allow these Jews into Palestine in their own interests and that His Majesty's Government were determined to avoid all risks of strife between the Arabs and Jews pending the time when United Nations would find a solution which would be fair and acceptable all round. I asked Count Sforza if I could give you his personal assurance that he would help in preventing ships leaving Italian ports and in other ways of stopping illegal circulation of Jews and he said that I could do so.

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RECEIVED  
MAY 10 1947  
TO RECORD



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British Embassy,

Paris.

5th May, 1946.

E 3807

8 MAY

72/174/47.

Dear Department,

With reference to your letter (E2199/84/31) of the 19th March, 1947, requesting information about the regulations governing the grant or withholding of clearance in French ports, we enclose copies of a memorandum on this subject provided by His Majesty's Consulate-General, Marseilles.

Yours ever,

Chancery.

Eastern Department,  
Foreign Office,  
S.W.1.

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17

Formalities connected with the departure  
of ships from the port of MARSEILLES.

When the date of departure of the ship is fixed, the Agents inform :-

- (a) The Maritime Security Officer at the Inscription Maritime, giving full particulars of the ship, her intended date of departure and destination. Notice is required to be given at least 24 hours before departure. Before the war, all ships were visited by the Maritime Security Office who inspected the passenger and safety certificates and satisfied himself that the requirements of the International Safety Convention were fully observed. Since the end of the war, however, this inspection has by no means been general. It is carried out in some cases only. It is, however, understood (from an unofficial source) that the French authorities have recently decided to instruct Maritime Security Officers to revert to the pre-war practice of carrying out an inspection in every case. Such an inspection should reveal cases of overloading ships by carrying passengers in excess of the permitted number. Ships leaving ports in the South of France with Jewish illegal immigrants on board are invariably overcrowded.
- (b) the Passport Police, giving names and destination of the passengers and the hour and date of embarkation. An official boards the ship at a given time to inspect passports and to carry out the formalities required by the currency control regulations.
- (c) the customs for examination of luggage. In addition, a manifest of the cargo (or a statement that the ship is sailing in ballast) and particulars of the passengers carried must be presented by an authorised shipbroker to the Head Office of the Customs who subsequently deliver a passport to the ship to allow her to proceed.
- N.B. Any objection raised by the Maritime Security Officer would be notified to the Customs who would withhold their passport pending the agreement of the Maritime Security Officer.

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*E 3829 / 84 / 31*

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AMENDMENT SLIP.

DEPARTMENTAL No. 1.

Rene telegram No. 1046 to Foreign  
Office 7/5/47.

Paragraph 2, line 5.

For "[gps. omitted from telegram]"  
please read "ship to pick up a complement  
of".

Communications Department.

10/5/47.



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Cypher/OTP

DEPARTMENTAL NO. 1.FROM ROME TO FOREIGN OFFICE.Sir. N. Charles.  
No. 1046.

7th May 1947.

D. 9.13 a.m. 8th May 1947.  
R. 1.50 p.m. 8th May 1947.

0:0:0:0

IMMEDIATE.TOP SECRET.

E 3830

9 MAY

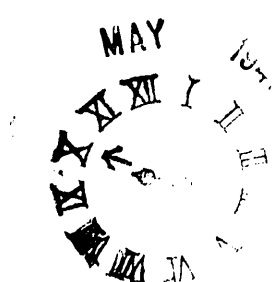
My immediately preceding telegram.

Jewish illegal immigration from Italy.

I have followed up my remarks to Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (as reported in my telegram No. 1037) by a further personal letter (copy by bag) giving our latest information about the ship "President Warfield" (which is now known to be in the small harbour of Portovenere near Spezia). I have made it plain in this letter and again personally when I saw him this afternoon that this ship is not a test case since it is obviously possible for the Italian Government to detain her and prevent a further abuse of Italian territory and aggravation of the situation in Palestine. I have referred in general terms to your point about safety of life at sea and drawn Count Sforza's attention to remarks on this subject by the Secretary of State for the Colonies in the House of Lords on April 27th.

2. As regards the "Vrissi" all information known locally was communicated in writing to Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and to the Ministry of the Interior on April 18th. Reference was made to the intention of those operating [groups omitted from telegram] Jews from Civitavecchia and Italian authorities were urged to take all necessary action. Ministry of Foreign Affairs were reminded on May 3rd. and we are again pressing them for a report on the present position.

[Note by Communications Department: Repetition of omitted groups is being obtained].



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1947

E

PALESTINE

F 3876

21

9 MAY

Registry Number } F 3876/24/31  
TELEGRAM FROM  
No. Sir N. Charles  
(Rome)  
Dated 1051.  
Received } 9 May  
in Registry } 9 May.

Illegal Immigrant ships: President Warfield.  
President Warfield will sail  
at 9.0 am. on May 9. Has been  
unable to contact. Minister of Foreign Affairs  
but will take matter up in the  
morning.

Last Paper.

L-3854.

(Minutes.)

References.

RR  
V 12/5

(Print.)

(How disposed of.)

L. I. Disk  
✓ May 12

(Action completed.)

7/2/12/15

(Index)

12/4/48

Next Paper.

L-3877

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Reference: FO 371 / 61841

E 3866

9 MAY

AMENDED DISTRIBUTION (9/5/47).

Cypher/OTP

DEPARTMENTAL No. 1.FROM ROME TO FOREIGN OFFICE.

Sir N. Charles. D. 11.11 a.m. 9th May, 1947.  
No. 1051.  
 9th May, 1947. R. 1.50 p.m. 9th May, 1947.

3 3 3

MOST IMMEDIATE.

I received following information at 2330 hours  
 May 8th.

2. President Warfield preparing to sail 9 a.m.  
 May 9th without passengers (repeat passengers).

3. Ship holds temporary permit of navigation  
 valid for six months issued by the Consul-General  
 Honduras in New York.

4. Owners are stated to be Western Trading  
 Company of New York.

5. The captain is 24 years of age, named  
 Isaaco Aronowich. The crew consists of 51 Americans,  
 three Mexicans, one Pole and one no nationality.

6. Nominal destination of the ship is given  
 as Alexandria.

7. I was unable to contact either the Minister  
 for Foreign Affairs or the Chief of Staff of the  
 Ministry of Marine at mid-night.

8. I am taking up the matter this morning with  
 the Italian Government, though I fear in this case it  
 is too late.



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Class . . . . . 371

Piece . . . . . 61841

Department of origin under Section 3 (4)

E 3877/84/31

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Reference: **FO 371 / 61841**

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E

E 3893 23

1947

10 MAY

PALESTINE

Registry  
Number

E3893/84/31

TELEGRAM FROM

No.

L. A. Charles

Dated

Ronal

Received  
in Registry

1054

9, May 1947  
10

Relegat Immigrant Ships, "Ident Warfield"  
 Relegat Ronal til 1051 (E3876/84/31) discusses  
 detention of ship. and threats by owners  
 to claim compensation. Legat Franzoni,  
 said that position was becoming untenable,  
 but L. A. Charles urged holding ship for  
 another week pending reply from F.O.

Last Paper.

3877.

References.

(Minutes.)

See subsequent files

(Print.)

(How disposed of.)

J. J. Dist

✓ May 12

(Action  
completed.)J. J. Dist  
4/16/48

(Index.)

J. J. Dist  
4/16/48

Next Paper.

3895

32008 F.O.P.

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Reference:

FO 371 / 61841

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E 3893

E 24

Cypher/OTP

10 MAY

DEPARTMENTAL NO.1.

FROM ROME TO FOREIGN OFFICE

Sir N.Charles,  
No.1054  
9th May,1947.

D. 3.15 p.m. 9th May,1947.

R. 5.40 p.m. 9th May,1947.

Repeated to Paris.

Q Q Q

MOST IMMEDIATE

My telegram No.1051.

Jewish Illegal Immigration.

The President Warfield is still in port and the Minister for Foreign Affairs through the Secretary General of Ministry of Foreign Affairs states that he will do all he can to prevent the ship from sailing for the next few days. Signor Franzoni telephoned the Naval Chief of Staff as well as the Minister of the Merchant Navy in my presence to say that every effort should be made to find a pretext to stop the ship leaving. He said the ship was empty and her papers were in perfect order. The owners were already threatening to claim compensation. With the best will the Italian Government [gp.undec.] stir up bad blood with foreign nations by holding up ships on no legal grounds. He asked whether our Naval authorities could not take measures. I said that while I understood his difficulties His Majesty's Government looked to the Italian Government to help them to stop the illegal immigration of Jews to Palestine. I explained that the Italian police were not co-operating enough, and mentioned the facts in paragraph 2 of my telegram No.1052. Signor Franzoni said that the Minister for Foreign Affairs was exercising his influence to tighten up control in order to be as helpful as possible to His Majesty's Government. He asked me to telegraph urgently to you to say that their position was almost untenable vis-a-vis other foreign governments, and that they could not hold up the President Warfield for more than two, three, four or five days. I urged that it should be held up for at least a week pending a reply from you.

Foreign Office please repeat immediate to Paris as my telegram No.73.

[Repeated Immediate to Paris].

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E 3895

25

PALESTINE

10 MAY 1947

Registry  
Number

E3895/84/31.

TELEGRAM FROM

No.

Lis. A. Charles  
Rome.

Dated

1059

Received  
in Registry9 May 1947  
10

President Warfield.

Refers Rome tel 1054 (E3893/84/31)  
 State Sec Gen Italian my foreign affairs  
 has succeeded in holding up ship but cannot  
 continue to do so beyond Monday May 12.  
 Therefore urgency as supply of information that  
 ship intends to pick up illegal immigrants  
 from Italian coast.

Last Paper.

3893

References.

(Print.)

(How disposed of.)

9.9 Dist  
 May 12.

Tel Rome 993

Rptel W. Yon 4662  
May 10.8. Hofgerald, for Mess  
May 12.

8/ 9.9 Dist  
 May 13  
 P.T.O.

(Action  
completed.)

J. L. M. 14/1

(Index)

10/14/1

Next Paper.

E 3897

Para. 2 was answered by me NO. 993 of 10 May  
 (Minutes.)  
 J. L. M. 14/1  
 13/5

In P.P. W. Yon tel 2791 10/

13 May 15

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Reference: FO 371 / 61841

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9A-P.B.

9.9. Dist

May 13.

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DEPARTMENTAL No. 1.

**Cypher/OTP**

## FROM ROME TO FOREIGN OFFICE

Sir N. Charles

No. 1059

D. 7.35 p.m. GMT 9th May, 1947.

9th May, 1947.

R. 10.40 p.m.                      9th May, 1947.

**F F F F**

MOST IMMEDIATE

**TOP SECRET**

My telegram No. 1054. 3 173/100/1

Secretary General of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs has just reported that he has succeeded in persuading competent Italian authorities to refuse President Warfield permission to leave port for the next two or three days on the pretext of the necessity of certain repairs. But Italian Government will not agree to hold up the ship indefinitely on suspicion and Secretary General begs for some very urgent action or further information on the part of His Majesty's Government to strengthen his hand. Failing such new development, he does not think the ship can be detained beyond Monday May 12th.

2. This makes it very urgent to supply us with all possible evidence that the ship is intended to pick up illegal immigrants from Italian coast and thus break the Italian law.

3. President Warfield's Jewish master has sworn that he is taking the ship to Istanbul direct.

4. I will speak to the Italian Prime Minister tonight.

[Copy sent to Middle East Secretariat]

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Reference: **FO 371 / 61841**



OUT FILE

**Cypher/OTP**

DEPARTMENTAL No. 2.

FROM FOREIGN OFFICE TO ROME.

No. 993.

D. 4 p.m. 10th May, 1947.

10th May. 1947.

Repeated to Washington No. 4662 (Most Immediate).

3 3 3

**MOST IMMEDIATE.**

Your telegram No. 1059 [of May 9th: Jewish  
Illegal Immigration].

As long ago as March 7th the New York Times reported that the "President Warfield" was fitting out in Norfolk, Virginia for the illegal immigration traffic and that some of her crew admitted that her destination was Palestine. They indicated that she was to follow the "Abril". 80% of the crew were Jewish. They were reported not to be bona fide seamen, being above the average in education, and 30% were training to be leaders in Palestine. Ship carried ample food stuffs and 1,000 life jackets.

2. You will be receiving through other channels further information available about this ship. I am repeating this telegram Most Immediately to Washington in case any further evidence may have come to light there. We have no evidence as to where the ship will attempt to load and in the nature of things it is almost impossible to secure such evidence. You should, however, point out to the Italian Government that we have the strongest evidence that the ship is to be used for this traffic and that our information in similar cases has always proved correct. Can the Master and Owners for their part show evidence that the ship is engaged in bona fide trading i.e. evidence of cargoes, legitimate passengers or loading dates. The mere assurance by the Jewish Master that he is proceeding to Istanbul (Constantinople) is hardly sufficient.

3. The Italian Government will now realise from the repeated representations you have made that this is a test case. We suggest that there are various methods they can employ for delaying the ship, i.e. by prolonging the examination of certificates before giving clearance or search for structural defects on which ship could be delayed for health reasons, e.g. inadequate sanitary arrangements.

If/

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 1 2  
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- 2 -

If she sails and reaches Palestine waters with illegal immigrants from Italy, we shall, as previously indicated in my telegram No. 651, have to insist that the Italian Government take back these people with all the resulting publicity and damage to Anglo-Italian relations, not to speak of the pressure which will be put on the Italian Government by Zionist interests. It will be much easier in the long run for the Italians if they take firm measures to prevent the departure of the "President Warfield" rather than face the above-mentioned developments.

4. You will no doubt have the local reports which have reached us to the effect that suspicious embarkations and activities have taken place in the last few days at Begliasce and other West Italian ports which suggest preparations for transshipment to "President Warfield". You should ask Italian authorities to watch these closely.

5. I have noted paragraph 2 of your telegram No. 1050 but you should nevertheless press for the placing of observers.

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Reference:

**FO 371 / 61841**

J.G.S.B.

**OUT FILE**

May 1947 29

**MOST IMMEDIATE**

*Despatched*

*M.*

*Draft.*  
Rome

Your telegram 1059 [of May 9th : Jewish  
Illegal Immigration]

*Telegram.*

No. 4

Dated

# Cypher

Departmental No.2

### Usual Distribution

Repeated to:

Washington. 4662

Co. (Sut. Lond)

agree

Western <sup>P.O. Box</sup> Sep 10/75

As long ago as March 7th the New York Times reported that the "President Warfield" was fitting out in Norfolk, Virginia for the illegal immigration traffic and that some of her crew admitted that her destination was Palestine. They indicated that she was to follow the "Abril". 80% of the crew were Jewish. They were reported not to be bona fide seamen, being above the average in education, and 30% were training to be leaders in Palestine. Ship carried ample food stuffs and 1,000 life jackets.

2. You will be receiving through other channels further information available about this ship. I am repeating this telegram Most Immediately to Washington in case any further evidence may have come to light there. We have no evidence as to where the ship will attempt to load and in the nature of things it is almost impossible to secure such evidence. You should, however, point out to the Italian Government that we have the strongest evidence that the ship is to be used for this traffic and that our information in similar cases has always proved correct. Can the Master and Owners for their part show evidence that the ship is engaged in bona fide trading i.e.

evidence/

**NOTHING TO BE WRITTEN IN THIS MARGIN.**

## References

FO 37 / 61841

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evidence of cargoes, legitimate passengers or loading dates. The mere assurance by the Jewish Master that he is proceeding to Istanbul is hardly sufficient.

3. The Italian Government will now realise from the repeated representations you have made that this is a test case.

We suggest that ~~there are~~ various methods they

can employ for ~~delaying~~ the ships by

*prolonging the examination of certificates before giving clearance or search for structural defects on which ship could be delayed for health reasons*

*(e.g. inadequate sanitary arrangements)*

If she sails and reaches Palestine waters with illegal immigrants from Italy,

we shall, as previously indicated in my

telegram No. 651, have to insist that

the Italian Government take back these

people with all the resulting publicity

and damage to Anglo-Italian relations, not

to speak of the pressure which will be put

on the Italian Government by Zionist

interests. It will be much easier in the

long run for the Italians *if they* to take firm

measures to prevent the departure of *the* this

*"President Warfield"*  
ship rather than to face the above mentioned developments.

4. You will no doubt have the local reports which have reached us to the effect that suspicious *and activities* embarkations have taken place

in the last few days at BOGLIASCO and other W. Italian ports which suggest preparations for transshipment to President Warfield. You should ask Italian Authorities to watch these closely.

5. I have noted para. 2 of your tel. no. 1050 but you should nevertheless press for the placing of observers. *10/1*

30

NOTHING TO BE WRITTEN IN THIS MARGIN.

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3895 84 31

31

12 MAY 1947

En Clair

DEPARTMENTAL NO. 2.

FROM WASHINGTON TO FOREIGN OFFICE

Lord Inverchapel,

D. 12.56 p.m. 10th May, 1947.

No. 2791

10th May, 1947.

R. 7.57 p.m. 10th May, 1947.

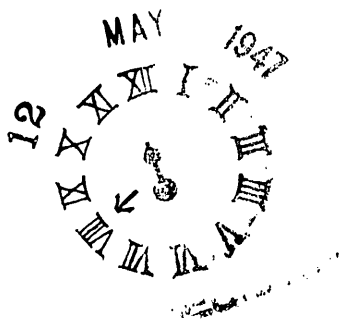
Repeated to Rome No. 100.

Q Q Q

IMMEDIATE

Your telegram No. 4662 paragraph 2.

No further information here.



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Reference: **FO 371 / 61841**

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E 3897 32

1947

PALESTINE

10 MAY

Registry  
Number

E 3897/84/31

TELEGRAM FROM

No.

Mr. Steinhilber  
Lubon

Dated

Received

in Registry

33  
9 May  
10

Illegal Immigrant Ship: S.S. KORA.  
 Give details of S.S. Kora believed to  
 be engaged in illegal immigrant  
 traffic. Wishes to know whether her  
 arrest should be proceeded with  
 by agents to whom she is indebted.

Last Paper.

7895

References.

(Print.)

(How disposed of.)

(Action  
completed.)

J. E. M. 16/5

(Index.)

J. E. M. 16/5

Next Paper.

7900

32003 F.O.P.

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Reference:

FO 371 / 61841

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Rg  
V 13/5

(Minute)  
 Telegram furnished. Please see  
 E 3896/48/6 for further details on "KORA".

10/5  
 (C.F. & CABLE)

E 3897

33

Cypher/OTP

10 MAY

DEPARTMENTAL NO. 1.

FROM LISBON TO FOREIGN OFFICE

Mr. Sterling.  
No. 331.  
May 9th, 1947.

D. 4.55. p.m. May 9th, 1947.  
R. 8.35. p.m. May 9th, 1947.

6 6 6 6 6

IMMEDIATE.

TOP SECRET.

S.S.Kora 817 tons stated to be owned by P. Gastarinos (Greek firm) who operate her under Panamanian registry cleared Lisbon April 9th for Gibraltar for bunkers. Captain stated that onward destination Genoa for conversion. This ship is believed to be engaged in illegal immigration traffic to Palestine. Agents in Lisbon, Norton and Company Limited (British firm) have informed me through P.C.O. that the ship left Lisbon owing them approximately £1000. They are willing if we wish to put an arrest on her and generally make every possible legal difficulty.

May I tell them to go ahead? If so please telegraph urgently present whereabouts of S.S. Kora. London agents are stated to be Whigham Richardson Bury Street.



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E 3900

34

1947

PALESTINE

10 MAY

Registry  
Number

TELEGRAM FROM

No.

Dated

Received  
in Registry

E 3900/84/31

Air A. Oberlo.

Rome

1050

8 May 1947

10

Illegal Immigration, Italy.

Re: Ref. I.V. 61 962 (E 3900/84/31) discussed  
 recent representation made to Italian Govt  
 for Omega Affairs, re suspected ship. State  
 the Minister Chief de Cabinet was contacted  
 yesterday evening that urgent action would  
 be taken, and promised very early report.

Last Paper.

7897

References.

Should we ring Mr. Beith <sup>(Minutes.)</sup> about Rome's request for  
 list of measures taken by French Govt.? *Beith*  
 (C.E. 61841) 12/5

(Print.)

(How disposed of.)

8) 9.9. Dist.

May 12

I have spoken to Mr. Beith and suggested  
 that Paris should reply to this point direct.  
 But I am afraid that on the specific question  
 of stopping ships from leaving port, they  
 can give Rome no ammunition.

R.C.

12/5

(Action  
completed.)

(Index)

5/20/11/1

4/1/4

Next Paper.

E 3932

32003 F.O.P.

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Reference:

FO 371 / 61841

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DEPARTMENTAL No: 1

Sir N. Charles  
No: 1050

8th May 1947

R. 7.0. p.m. 9th May 1947

Repeated to Paris

X:X:X:

**IMMEDIATE**

**Secret.**

**Your telegram No: 962.**

Jewish illegal immigration from Italy.

I reported in my telegrams Nos: 1037 and 1046 further urgent representations I have made to the Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs personally about suspected ships and his promise of cooperation. The Minister's Chief de Cabinet was confident yesterday evening that urgent action would be taken, and promised a very early report which I am awaiting.

2. It is possible the Italian authorities may on their own initiative propose some proper measure as suggested in your telegram under reference and this would be much better from the tactical point of view. While we must maintain steady pressure we have to guard against unduly forcing the pace, (c.f. my telegram No: 1045 paragraph 6 and paragraph 7). I am therefore reserving your suggestion until we see what the Italian Government do in the next few hours. The placing of observers on ships flying a foreign flag, which, however strongly they are suspected, are not yet proved to be engaged in illegal activities, would be a drastic step for Customs administration authorities to take. I should be grateful to learn whether the French Government who I understand have recently been approached by us on the subject of suspected vessels have been prepared to stretch their jurisdiction in French ports to the same point. In fact it would be valuable if I could be furnished by telegram with a short account of practical measures, which the French Government have agreed to take or have taken at our [grps.undec ? request in order to] suppress illegal traffic of Jews. My hand here would be strengthened if I were able to point out that an allied Government had gone at least as far as to help us in this matter as we expected the Italian Government to go, and I could thereby correct in advance any impression which the Italian Government might form that undue pressure was being put upon them.

Foreign Office please repeat Paris Immediate as my telegram No: 71.

[Repeated to Paris].

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Reference: **FO 37** / **61841**

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E 3932

36

PALESTINE

2 MAY

Registry  
Number

TELEGRAM FROM

No.

Dated

Received  
in Registry

E 3932/84/31

Sir H. Charles.

Rome.

1062.

9. May 1947

12

Illegal Emigration, Rome.

Refer Rome tel 10.9 (E 3895/84/11)

Arrived representation to Italian Prime Minister  
re sailing of illegal immigrant ship from  
Italian port. It is that Italian authorities  
are quite anxious to please. Both P. M. and  
Minister for Foreign Affairs seem prepared to be  
co-operative by saying they cannot afford to put  
themselves in the wrong with other countries.

Last Paper.

3900

References.

(Print.)

(How disposed of.)

J. G. West

May. 12.

(Action  
completed.)

(Index.)

J. G. West

10/9/48

Next Paper.

3937

32003 F.O.P.

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12 hrs

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D. 12.44.p.m.10th May 1947

R. 4.55.p.m.10th May 1947

**Reference:**

FO 371/61841

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1948

2. The Italian authorities I feel are quite anxious to please. Both the Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs and high officials seem prepared to be cooperative but they say they cannot afford to put themselves in the wrong with other countries. They blame the Allied officials (French and American) in Germany and Austria for allowing overt circulation of Jews and they say they have not enough frontier guards or police in the country to be really effective.

92

1947

E

PALESTINE

E 3937

38

12 MAY

Registry  
Number

E3917/84/31

TELEGRAM FROM

No.

Rev. H. Charles

Dated

Rome

Received  
in Registry

1060,

10 May 1947  
12

President Warfield

Refer Rome tel 1059 (E3891/84/31)  
 In conversation reported in ref. He has  
 repeated over more, Minister Enquiry, i.e. whether  
 British Naval Authorities could not themselves  
 take some action against this ship when she  
 came out of Italian port. Please further  
 comments.

Last Paper.

7932

References.

(Minutes.)

We are acting on Rome's  
 suggestion

10 May 15

(Print.)

(How disposed of.)

G.I. Dist

✓ May 12

(Action  
completed.)

G. E. White

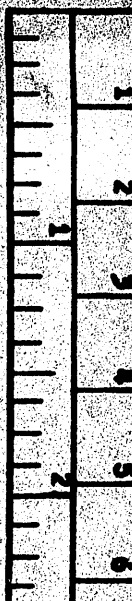
(Index.)

[Signature]

Next Paper.

7938

32003 F.O.P.



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Reference:

FO 371 / 61841

Cypher/OTP

PARLAMENTAL NO. 1

E 3937

FROM ROME TO FOREIGN OFFICE

12 MAY

Sir N. Charles  
No. 1060

D. 11.20 a.m. 10th May, 1947.

10th May, 1947.

R. 8.26 p.m. 10th May, 1947.

IMMEDIATE  
TOP SECRET

MM

E 3870/84/21

My telegram No. 1059: Jewish illegal immigration.

In conversation reported in my telegram under reference Secretary General repeated [gp. undec. ? once more] Minister's enquiry (my telegram No. 1054) whether the British naval authorities could not themselves take some action against this ship when she came out of the Italian port. He was reminded of the limitations imposed by international law.

2. I assume that consideration has been given to the possibility of detaching a British warship to shadow the "President Warfield" after she leaves port and to doing everything consistent with international law, e.g. illumination of ship by searchlight, to hamper embarkation of Jews off Italian coast.

3. This would be much more effective than reliance on the Italian Navy. We hope to take the line with the Italian authorities that the "President Warfield" is a test case. While I realise that it would be impracticable for us to shadow every suspected ship it does seem very important in the particular case of this large ship we should be able to show the Italian Government that we are able and willing to help whenever possible with our own resources. Moreover I suggest that if by naval action of the sort suggested we could hamper and even prevent mass embarkation on "President Warfield", I [sic ? it] would discourage the use of Italy as a base for illegal immigration.

[Copy sent to Middle East Secretariat.]



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Piece . . . . . 6184/ . . . . .

**Department of origin under Section 3 (4)**

of the Public Records Act, 1958

E 3938/84/31

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1947

E

PALESTINE

E 3939

12 MAY

40

Registry  
Number

TELEGRAM FROM

No.

Dated

Received  
in Registry

E 3939/84/31

M. Duff Cooper

Paris

116, leaving  
10 May 1947  
12

'President Warfield'  
 Ref. Rome tel 1052 (E 3877/84/11) State  
 Secy of Foreign Affairs who was approached  
 accordingly, promised to do their best to  
 prevent any illegal embarkation from  
 Corsican coast.

Last Paper.

3938

References.

(Minutes.)

In P.P. Paris tel 385 11/1-

*[Signature]*  
 (S.E. CABLE)  
 11/5

(Print.)

(How disposed of.)

G. G. Diet  
 May 12.

(Action  
completed.)

(Index)

G. G. Diet 14/5

*[Signature]*  
 14/5

Next Paper.

E 3949

32003 F.O.P.

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Reference:

FO 371 / 61841

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E 3939  
12. MAY

E. 41

Mr. Duff Cooper  
No. 116 Saving  
10th May, 1947

R. 4.00 p.m. 11th May, 1947

Repeated to Rome No. 5 Saving

ddddd

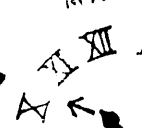
**SECRET**

**Rome telegram No. 1052; S.S. President Warfield.**

Ministry of Foreign Affairs who were approached accordingly promised to do their best to prevent any illegal embarkation from Corsican coast.

[Copy sent to M.E. Secretariat]

promis  
from C

[illegible]



3939 84 3/

INDEXED

E 42

[This telegram is of particular secrecy and should be retained by the authorised recipient and not passed on].

Cypher/OTP CABINET DISTRIBUTION.

FROM PARIS TO FOREIGN OFFICE.

Mr. Duff Cooper

No. 385

11th May 1947

D. 3.18 p.m. 11th May 1947.  
R. 5.35 p.m. 11th May 1947.

PPP

IMMEDIATE

Following is repetition of my telegram No. 116 Saving to you.

[Begins].

Secret.

Rome telegram No. 1052: S.S. President Warfield.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs who were approached accordingly promised to do their best to prevent any illegal embarkation from Corsican coast.

Please repeat to Rome immediate as my telegram No. 65.

[Repeated to Rome immediate].



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E

E 3949

43

1947

PALESTINE

13 MAY

Registry  
Number

TELEGRAM FROM

No.

Dated

Received  
in Registry

E 3949/84/31

Les. A. Barker.

Rome.

1081

12, May 1947  
13President Warfield:

Notes the following tel concerning "Ident Warfield" have only been marked immediate but warns that Standing Committee will no doubt meet to consider them tomorrow.

Last Paper.

7939

References.

(Minutes.)

See on E 3951

(Print.)

(How disposed of.)

J. I. Dist,  
Spec. Med.  
May. 13.

(Action  
completed.)

(Index.)

J. I. Dist

J. I. Dist

Next Paper.

7950

32003 F.O.P.

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and should be  
not passed on  
E 3949  
SECRET  
13 MAY

DIPLOMATIC (SECRET)

13 MAY

44

D. 10. 24 a.m. 12th May, 1947.

R. 7. 55 p.m. 12th May, 1947.

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In view of the time of despatch they have only been marked immediate but this is to warn you that standing Interdepartmental Committee will no doubt wish to consider them early tomorrow.

# 1947

# E

E 3950

17 MAY

PALESTINE

Registry  
Number

TELEGRAM FROM

No.

*Dated*

*Received  
in Registry*

Registry }  
Number } E 3950/84/31.

No. *Lie. A. A. A. A.*

Dated Acml.

Received in Registry } 1082.

12, May 1900  
13 -

### Last Paper.

3949

## References.

(Print.)

(How disposed of.)

J. J. West

Spec. Messr.

May 13

(Action completed.)

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795-1

**32008 F.O.P.**

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Reference: **FO 371 / 61841**

13 MAY

DIPLOMATIC (SECRET)

(A). They will at once order the Captain from Spezia to undertake a fresh and most rigorous technical investigation of the ship to discover whether there were positive grounds for holding her unseaworthy or to order /further

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Reference: **FO 371 / 81841**

further repairs. They were not confident that this could spin the matter out more than a few more days as this investigation would have to relate to the ship in her empty condition i.e. they could not presume the presence on board of passengers in view of the Master's declaration that he intended to sail the ship empty.

(B) Since the ship had arrived with a certificate of seaworthiness issued by the Bureau Veritas of New York (confirmed by Veritas of Marseilles) which restricted her to sea passengers in what is known as "R" (RADE or coastal) traffic they could, if we wished, refuse to allow the ship to make for the open sea and require her to return coastwise to her last port i.e. Marseilles. In such case they would escort the ship to the limit of Italian territorial waters and would be obliged if we would take over her shadowing thereafter.

(C) Pending the upshot of (A) and our considered opinion on (B) the Italian Navy would continue as at present to watch closely the President Warfield in Porto Venere with a coastal patrol vessel. (This is better than [grp.undec. ? an] "observer" who the Italian Navy think would be easily disposed of). Whatever might be the decision the Embassy would be given due warning before permission was granted to the ship to leave the harbour.

4. Our representatives argued strongly in the sense of the last 3 sentences of paragraph 2 of your telegram 992 i.e. that the Italian authorities should put the onus on the Master or owners of the ship to prove that she was intending to engage in bona fide trading and should meanwhile detain her indefinitely. The Italians considered that this line was impossible since it was not in accordance with the maritime law of their own or any other country to require a merchant ship with papers in order, to prove and justify her onward movements. They agreed that they could command declarations from the Master but obviously these would be useless if later the ship were detected in a breach of Italian law e.g. by illegal embarkation of passengers she could be proceeded against under Italian law if she returned within Italian jurisdiction but would only be detained until payment of the fines specified by Italian law.

5. Pressed by our representatives whether they could not take action under general police powers, the Italians replied that they could if the ship were Italian but did not see how to

/proceed

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proceed against a ship flying the flag of a United Nation. The Italians agreed however to examine whether some flaw could not be found with the status or papers of the amateur crew which might constitute individual breaches of Italian law.

6. See comment in my immediately following telegram.

Please repeat to Washington and Paris as my telegrams 199 and 75 respectively both Important.

[Repeated important to Washington and Paris]

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E 3961

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1947

PALESTINE

13 MAY

Registry  
Number

FROM

No.

Dated

Received  
in Registry

E 3961/84/31.

Embassy

Rome

1955

225/8/47

7 May 1955

13

President Weinfeld:  
Transmit copy of letter to President Weinfeld  
of May 7. re Jewish Illegal Immigration  
and the President Weinfeld

Last Paper.

3951

(Minutes.)

*[Signature]*  
(J.E. CABLE)  
14/5

References.

Cable C.O.  
14/5  
V 15/5

(Print.)

(How disposed of.)

8/5/55  
✓ May 27

(Action  
completed.)

(Index.)

*[Signature]*

*[Signature]*

Next Paper.

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Reference:

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No. 195

( 325/8/47 )

E 3961

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13 MAY

HIS Majesty's Representative at Rome presents his compliments  
to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and has the honour to  
transmit herewith copy of the under-mentioned paper.

*British Embassy,*

*Rome, May 7th, 1947.*

*Reference to previous despatch :*

E 3007/84/31

From Foreign Office : Telegram No. 962 of 5th May 1947.  
~~XXX~~

*Description of Enclosure.*

| Name and Date.                                                                        | Subject.                                                                   |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Copy of letter to Count Sforza, Minister of Foreign Affairs, No. 325/8/47 of 7th May. | Jewish illegal immigration to Palestine from Italy - "President Warfield". |

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7th May, 1947.

My dear Minister,

Since I wrote to you on 3rd May and we had our talk the other day about the very serious question of Jewish illegal immigration to Palestine from Italy, I have received certain further information concerning the steamer "President Warfield".

Our suspicions that this ship was intending to call at an Italian port have been confirmed, since we have just learned that she arrived on 5th May at the Cantiere Lauro in Portovenere near La Spezia, where she is stated to be undergoing repairs likely to take two or three days. We have also learned that this steamer is considerably larger than previously reported. She is of over 4,000 tons gross, and it is estimated that she could take up to 5,000 illegal immigrants.

The British authorities have the strongest suspicions that, as your Ministry were first informed in the Aide-Memoire handed to Ministro Zoppi on 2nd May, the purpose of the "President Warfield" after she has completed fitting out, is to embark Jews from isolated points along the coast of Italy for illegal immigration to Palestine. All experience of this traffic in illegal Jewish immigrants shows that once the ship has completed its fitting out and has left Portovenere, it will be extremely difficult, if not impossible, to keep track of its movements, and it is very likely not to be heard of again until it arrives off the coast of Palestine. In any event, it would probably not be possible to detain the ship once she had left port and the position is therefore that if appropriate action is not taken within the next day or so, it may be too late to prevent a further abuse of Italian territory and a further serious incident in Palestine.

I duly reported to my Government the personal assurance you were good enough to give me the other day that you would help to prevent this clandestine traffic between Italy and Palestine, and I am sure that my Government will have deeply appreciated this mark of your goodwill.

I am confident, therefore, that I may count upon you to take every possible step to investigate this particular case of the "President Warfield" and to prevent the ship from leaving Portovenere.

I cannot, of course, presume to suggest how this can be done, but I feel sure that with the goodwill of the Italian Government, the necessary action could

Count Carlo Sforza,  
Minister for Foreign Affairs,  
Palazzo Chigi,  
ROME.

100

+ to stop the "President Warfield" from leaving Portovenere

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*E3995*

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*E4042*

*E4108*

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51

**SECRET AND URGENT**

7th May, 1947.

Since I wrote to you on 3rd May and we had our talk the other day about the very serious question of Jewish illegal immigration to Palestine from Italy, I have received certain further information concerning the steamer "President Warfield".

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Palazzo Chigi,  
ROME.

/ be

+ to stop the "President Warfield" from leaving Portovenere

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be taken. There is, however, one aspect of this problem

to which my Government have drawn my attention, and which might facilitate appropriate action by the Italian authorities. This is the question of the grave risk to human life involved in this traffic in illegal immigrants, who are crowded into entirely unsuitable ships, lacking in every essential requirement for passenger traffic, and unequipped with adequate safety devices in the event of anything occurring to the ship itself. I cannot do better in this connection than quote the following passage from the speech made by the British Secretary of State for the Colonies in the House of Lords on April 23rd:-

"The methods adopted by those responsible for illegal immigration were criminal. There were three persons to every gross registered ton of chipping, which meant 1,200 persons in a ship of 400 tons gross weight. Had it not been for the Royal Navy many of these ships, which left not only French and Italian ports, would never have reached their destination, and thousands of these poor deluded people would have lost their lives. One day, perhaps soon, one of these ships would be lost at sea. The Government would take no responsibility for the lives which would be sacrificed should such a disaster occur."

Apart from all other considerations, this traffic in clandestine immigrants, which a speaker in the House of Lords aptly compared to the old slave trade across the Atlantic, is a scandal which I am sure the Italian Government will wish to play their part in suppressing in the interests of common humanity.

believe me, my dear Minister,

Yours very sincerely

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